

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently amended) A third party payment system, comprising:

a first redeemable instrument printed on an exterior side of a sealed envelope redeemable by a customer, wherein the first redeemable instrument includes a first redeemable value creditable to the customer by a vendor; and

a second redeemable instrument enclosed within the sealed envelope redeemable by the vendor, wherein the second redeemable instrument includes a second redeemable value payable to the vendor by a third party.

2. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 1, wherein the first redeemable instrument comprises a gift certificate and the first redeemable value provides an amount of the gift certificate.

3. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 2, wherein the second redeemable instrument comprises a bank check and the second redeemable value provides an amount of the bank check.

4. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 3, wherein the amount of the gift certificate is greater than the amount of the bank check.

5. (Currently amended) The third party payment system of claim 4, wherein the gift certificate is redeemable by ~~at least one participating merchant~~ the customer at a plurality of participating vendors, and the bank check is valid only for the plurality of participating vendors ~~at least one participating merchant~~.

6. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 1, wherein the sealed envelope includes at least one removably perforated tab.

7. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 6, wherein a premature removal of the at least one removably perforated tab voids the first redeemable instrument.

8. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 1, wherein the second redeemable instrument is attached to an interior of the sealed envelope.

9. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 8, wherein the second redeemable instrument includes a perforated edge for removal from the interior of the sealed envelope.

10. (Previously presented) The third party payment system of claim 1, wherein the sealed envelope includes a listing of participating merchants on a second exterior side.

11. (Currently amended) A third party gift certificate system, comprising:

a gift certificate printed on an exterior side of a sealed envelope, wherein the gift certificate includes a redeemable amount; and

a ~~check~~ negotiable instrument enclosed within the sealed envelope, wherein the ~~check~~ negotiable instrument includes a payable amount.

12. (Previously presented) The third party gift certificate system of claim 11, wherein the redeemable amount is greater than the payable amount.

13. (Currently amended) The third party [~~payment~~] gift certificate system of claim 11, wherein the gift certificate is redeemable by ~~at least one participating merchant~~ a customer at a plurality of participating vendors, and the ~~bank check negotiable instrument~~ is valid only for the plurality of participating vendors ~~at least one participating merchant~~.

14. (Currently amended) The third party [~~payment~~] gift certificate system of claim 11, wherein the sealed envelope includes at least one removably perforated edge.

15. (Currently amended) The third party [~~payment~~] gift certificate system of claim 14, wherein a premature removal of the at least one removably perforated edge voids the gift certificate.

16. (Currently amended) The third party [~~payment~~] gift certificate system of claim 11, wherein the ~~bank check negotiable instrument~~ is attached to an interior side of the sealed envelope.

17. (Currently amended) The third party ~~[payment]~~ gift certificate system of claim 16, wherein the ~~bank check negotiable instrument~~ includes a perforated edge for removal from the interior side of the sealed envelope.

18. (Currently amended) The third party ~~[payment]~~ gift certificate system of claim 11, wherein the sealed envelope includes a listing of participating merchants on a second exterior side.

19. (Currently amended) A method for implementing a third party payment system, comprising the steps of:

issuing a redeemable instrument to a first party for a predetermined amount, wherein the redeemable instrument is provided by a third party and is printed on an exterior side of a sealed envelope, and wherein the sealed envelope contains a negotiable instrument; and
guaranteeing that the redeemable instrument can be redeemed in exchange for a
consideration provided by a second party equal to the predetermined amount; and

reimbursing ~~[the]~~ a second party by allowing the second party to remove the negotiable instrument from the sealed envelope, wherein the negotiable instrument is payable to the second party for a payable amount.

20. (Currently amended) The method of claim 19, further comprising guaranteeing that the
redeemable instrument can be redeemed for the predetermined amount in exchange for
consideration provided by the second party, wherein the guaranteeing step includes the step of

obtaining agreement between the second and third party regarding the payable amount of the negotiable instrument.

21. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, after the issuing step, comprising the further steps of:

- allowing the redeemable instrument to be gifted from the first party to a giftee; and
- allowing the giftee to redeem the redeemable instrument with the second party.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the redeemable instrument comprises a gift certificate and the negotiable instrument comprises a bank check.

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim 19, wherein the first party comprises a customer, and the second party comprises a participating vendor merchant.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the payable amount of the negotiable instrument is less than the predetermined amount of the redeemable instrument.